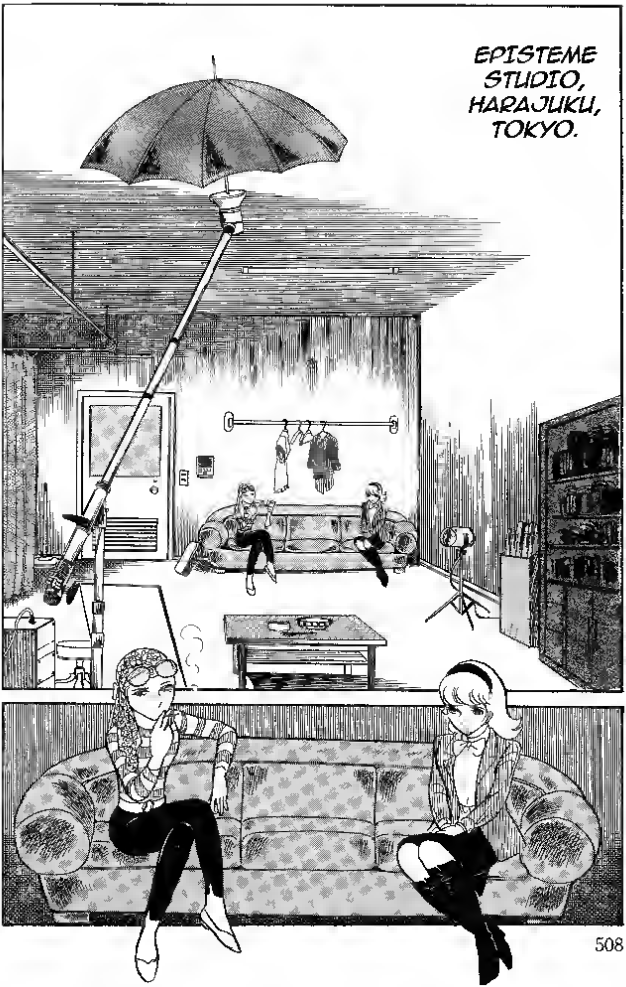
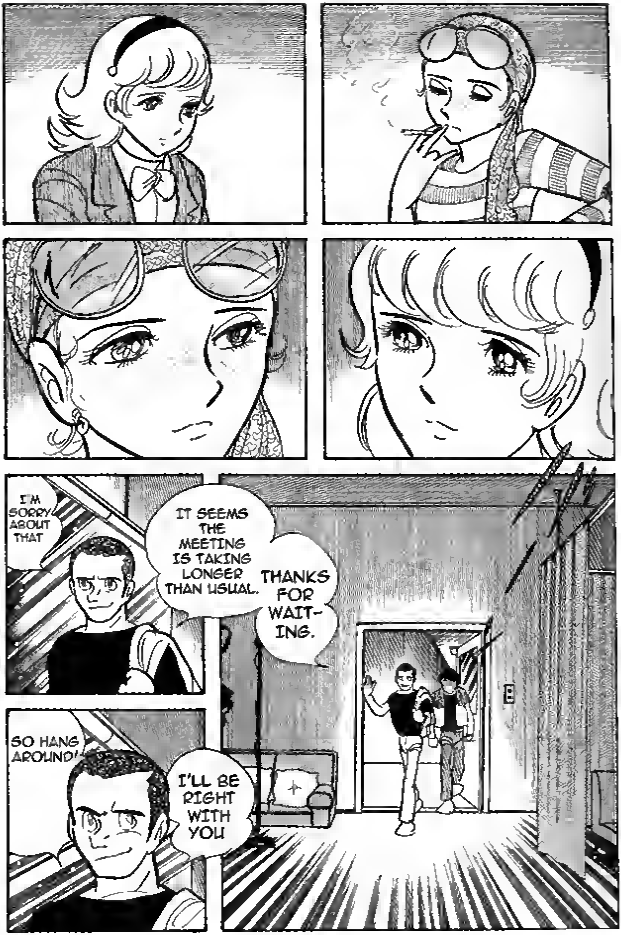
THE MODERN NARCISSUS


EPISTEME
STUDIO,
HARAJUKU,
TOKYO.


I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT
IT SEEMS THE MEETING IS TAKING LONGER THAN USUAL.
THANKS FOR WAITING.
SO HANG AROUND!
I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU

NOTE: ABBA WAS A SWEDISH POP MUSIC GROUP FORMED IN STOCKHOLM IN 1972

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ドラララ
CELINE!
WHAT'S UP?!
MADEMOISELLE YOU COULD SAY I'M A BIT OF A PHOTOGRAPHER,
YOU'RE HAJIME TARAO...!

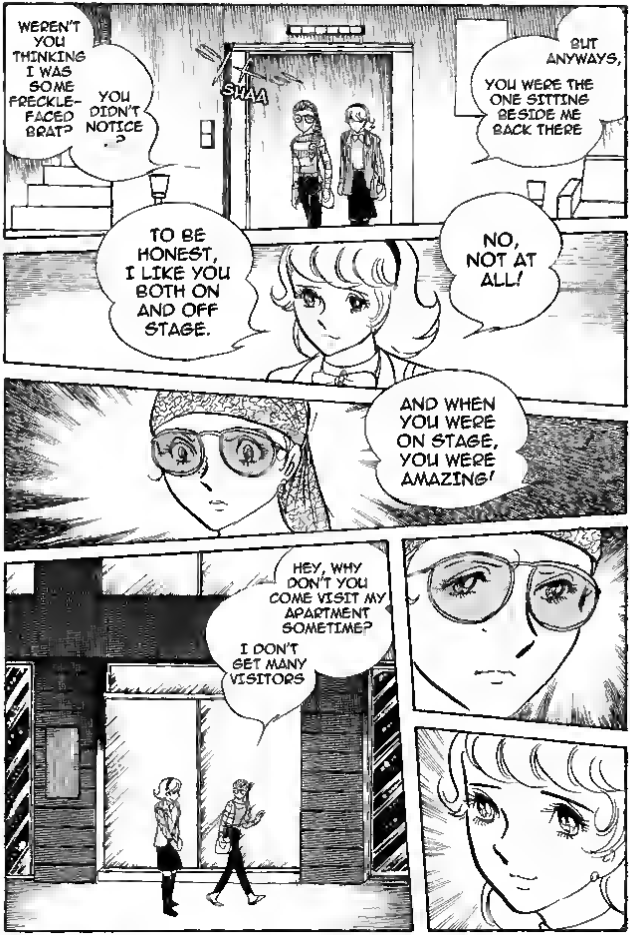
FOR TAKING PICTURES OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN, HAJIME TARAO IS THE JAPANESE AUTHORITY ON FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY!
JUST ONCE, IF YOU DON'T MIND, WHY DON'T YOU TRY DROPPING BY MY STUDIO?
MADEMOISELLE, I'D ABSOLUTELY LOVE IT IF YOU'D LET ME TAKE YOUR PICTURE...
I'LL JOIN IN FOR A BIT.
FOR BACKGROUND MUSIC SWITCH TO SOME BEE GEES
ALRIGHT! LET'S TRY CHANGING THE ATMOSPHERE!
...
HMMM...

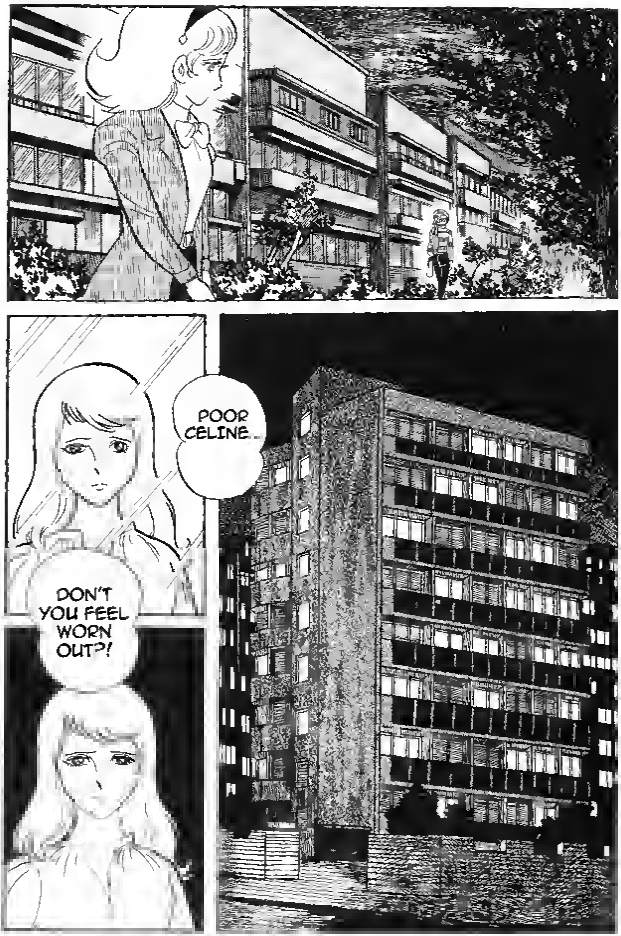
I REALLY WANT TO DO THIS, BUT...
WHAT DO YOU THINK JOE?
OH MY, NO WONDER I HEAR SUCH NICE THINGS ABOUT HER...!

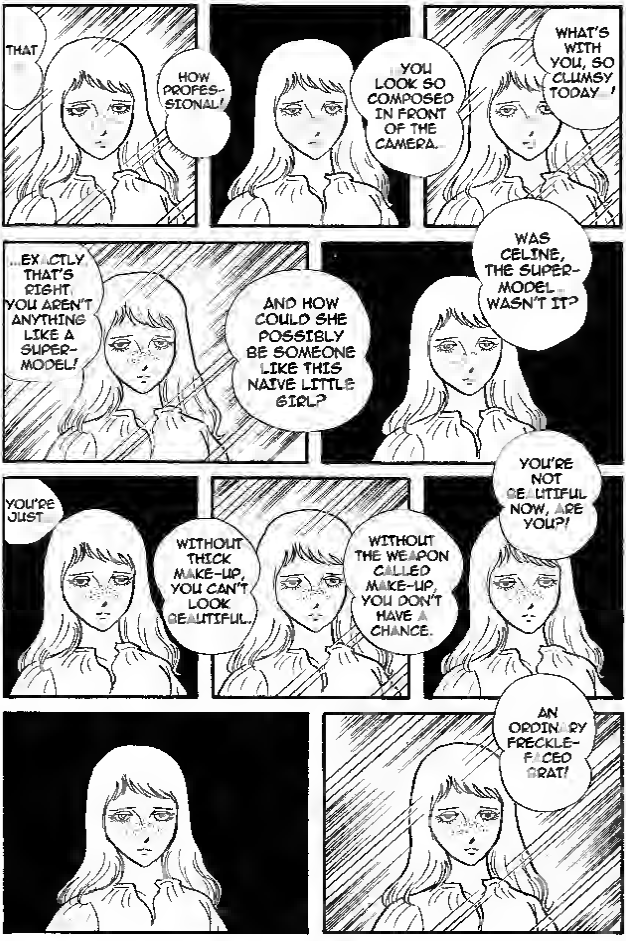
HMM...
I'M NOT REALLY FEELING IT. SOMETHING LOOKS LONELY ABOUT THESE...
MADEMOISELLE FRANCOISE!
RIGHT! YOU WERE
UHHM...
EH ?!
LET'S GIVE THAT A TRY!
WE'LL SET THIS MADEMOISELLE IN AS WELL
ALRIGHTY, YOU'RE GOOD TO GO..!

HAHAHA. ISN'T THIS WONDERFUL JOE?
IT'S NOT JUST GIRLS, BUT EVERY HUMAN HAS THE DESIRE TO BE SEEN AS BEAUTIFUL./
EVEN THOUGH I CAME HERE, I DION'T THINK IT WOULD BE ANYTHING LIKE THIS...!
CELINE! THAT'S PERFECT! THAT'S IT... GIVE ME THAT LOOK!
FRANCOISE, GET CLOSER TO CELINE!
THAT'S IT! THEY WANNA FEEL THOSE LEZ VIBES!

BESIDES THAT, THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT CELINE... SHE ISN'T HER USUAL SELF...
SHE'S SEES THE LOVELY MADEMOISELLE AS A RIVAL.
GOOD, IT'S WORKING! CELINE'S GETTING INTO IT FOR ONCE!
1 2 3
GOOD WORK EVERYBODY!
SHUUUUU
FOR SOME REASON, THIS PERSON SEEMS VERY LONELY
MAYBE SHE'S JUST EXHAUSTED?
I GUESS YOU LEARN TO BE DARING IF YOU'VE BEEN AT IT AS LONG AS US!
HMPH!
I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT
OH!
GIGGLE
YOU WERE SO CHARMING AND BOLD WHEN I WAS WATCHING WITH THE STAFF!
THAT WAS AMAZING!


WEREN'T YOU THINKING I WAS SOME FRECKLE-FACED BRAT?
YOU DIDN'T NOTICE . . ?
SWAA
BUT ANYWAYS,
YOU WERE THE ONE SITTING BESIDE ME BACK THERE
TO BE HONEST, I LIKE YOU BOTH ON AND OFF STAGE.
NO, NOT AT ALL!
AND WHEN YOU WERE ON STAGE, YOU WERE AMAZING!
HEY, WHY DON'T YOU COME VISIT MY APARTMENT SOMETIME?
I DON'T GET MANY VISITORS


POOR CELINE...
DON'T YOU FEEL WORN OUT?!


THAT
HOW PROFESSIONAL!
YOU LOOK SO COMPOSED IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA.
WHAT'S WITH YOU, SO CLUMSY TODAY!
WAS CELINE, THE SUPER-MODEL WASN'T IT?
AND HOW COULD SHE POSSIBLY BE SOMEONE LIKE THIS NAIVE LITTLE GIRL?
...EXACTLY THAT'S RIGHT. YOU AREN'T ANYTHING LIKE A SUPER-MODEL!
YOU'RE NOT BEAUTIFUL NOW, ARE YOU?!
WITHOUT THE WEAPON CALLED MAKE-UP, YOU DON'T HAVE A CHANCE.
WITHOUT THICK MAKE-UP, YOU CAN'T LOOK BEAUTIFUL.
YOU'RE JUST
AN ORDINARY FRECKLE-FACED BRAT!

CRASH
SOB
SOB
SOB
PING-PONG
IT'S ME...
WHO'S THERE?!
I'M SORRY, I KNOW IT'S SUDDEN...
FRANCOISE
BUT BACK THERE, YOU LOOKED...
WELL, WHAT IS IT?

I'VE MADE A LIFE OF GOING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN THE MIRROR AND CAMERA.
IT'S BEEN TEN YEARS... I'VE, UH, I'VE BEEN MODELING SINCE I WAS NINE.
...
WELL, IT REALLY GOT TO ME... YOU LOOKED REALLY LONELY.
SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY, I BEGAN TO WONDER WHERE MY REAL SELF WENT...
I'VE BEEN LIVING THAT WAY MY WHOLE LIFE.
EVEN WHEN I WAS SAD, I HAD TO PUT ON MY HAPPY FACE
NO... THAT'S NOT TRUE!
I THINK I WAS JUST JEALOUS OF YOUR NATURAL BEAUTY
AND.. SINCE I MET YOU...
LATELY I'VE BEEN WONDERING IF IT'S DEPRESSION, MAYBE THAT'S WHY TODAY NO.. WHY I'M NEVER FEELING RIGHT

HUH
?!
I JUST WANT... TO BE 'HUMAN' AGAIN..!
EVEN THEN...
HONEST-LY,
CELINE, I WANT YOU TO COME TO MY HOUSE SOMETIME
THERE'S A LOVELY PLACE I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU

DON'T YOU THINK THIS BEAUTY IS 'NATURAL'...?
NONE OF THEM CAN STAND AGAINST THE FLOW OF TIME.
HEY, YOU'D CALL THESE PLANTS BEAUTIFUL, RIGHT...?
BUT...
BECAUSE WE MATURE AND ROT AWAY, WE CAN LEAVE BEHIND A 'SEED'
BUT AFTER JUST ONE MONTH, THESE BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS WITHER AND ROT AWAY.
WHAT I'M SAYING IS THAT THE SEED, CALLED 'REALITY'...
MAKES IT SO THAT ONE DAY, THE BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS WILL BLOOM AGAIN.
CELINE, DO WE REALLY HAVE ANY CHOICE BUT TO LIVE LIKE THAT?

THANKS, FRANCOISE I UNDERSTAND NOW.
I GUESS SO
BUT ISN'T IT SO WE CAN LEARN WHAT TRUE BEAUTY AND HAPPINESS ARE?
THE FALSE EMPTINESS AND LONELINESS WE FEEL...
ARE THE FIRST PARTS OF REALITY WE LEARN TO SEE
THE BOY, NARCISSUS, WAS SO ENTRANCED BY HIS BEAUTIFUL REFLECTION IN THE WATER.. THAT IN HIS OBSSESSION, HE TURNED INTO A DAFFODIL (NARCISSUS). THAT IS WHY THE ACT OF 'LOVING ONESELF' IS CALLED NARCISM.
I'M LIKE NARCISSUS FROM THE GREEK MYTH I GUESS NOW THAT I'M A FLOWER, I CAN'T BE HUMAN AGAIN
WE...

THAT'S MY LITTLE BUDDY'S ROOM-MATE! MY FANTASY OBJECT!
THAT'S PERFECT! IT'S SO HIP!
WOAH!
S comics
THAT'S RIGHT, CELINE...
IN THE TRUE MEANING OF THE WORD (A PERSON WHO LOVES ONESELF), YOU'RE NARCISSUS. YOU'RE LIVING OUR ETERNAL DREAM.